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TO ALL AMERICAN REPUBLIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS IMMEDIATE

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AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

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E.O. 12356: N/A

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: ARA GUIDANCE/BRIEFING OF MARCH 7, 1984

1. PREPARED PRESS GUIDANCES FOR NOON PRESS BRIEFING:

-- EL SALVADOR: REACTION TO NYTIMES ANONYMOUS SOURCE STORY --

Q: HAS THE STATE DEPARTMENT TAKEN ANY STEPS TO CONFIRM OR INQUIRE INTO THE SUBSTANCE OF THE ANONYMOUS SALVADORAN SOURCE ALLEGATIONS CARRIED OVER THE WEEKEND IN THE NEW YORK TIMES? HAS THE DEPARTMENT BEEN IN TOUCH WITH EITHER SENATOR TSONGAS (D-MASS.) OR REPRESENTATIVE SIMMONS (D-MASS.) WHO REPORTEDLY TALKED TO THE SOURCE?

A: WE HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH SENATOR TSONGAS ABOUT THE SUBJECT AND ARE LOOKING INTO WHETHER ANY NEW EVIDENCE IS ACTUALLY AVAILABLE.

Q: WILL THE DEPARTMENT BE PROVIDING AN UPDATE OR BRIEFING

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ON ANY CONVERSATIONS WHICH DEVELOP?

A: WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE WHAT DEVELOPS. A NUMBER OF THE CHARGES ARE NOT NEW, ONLY THE SOURCE, WHO APPEARS TO

DESIRE COMPLETE ANONYMITY. THIS CONSIDERATION ALONE WOULD APPEAR TO LIMIT THE DEGREE TO WHICH THE SUBJECT COULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR BACKGROUNDING.

IF ASKED (NOTE TO THE BRIEFER: AT THIS POINT WE'RE NOT PREPARED TO GET INTO ISSUES WHICH MIGHT PREJUDICE THE CHURCHWOMEN'S CASE, AND ARE IN NO POSITION TO COMMENT ON ANY NEW EVIDENCE WHICH MIGHT BE AVAILABLE FROM THE ANONYMOUS SOURCE. THE FOLLOWING QS AND AS SHOULD ALL CONTAIN THAT CAVEAT)

Q: AT WHAT POINT NOW IS THE DEPARTMENT PREPARED TO ADDRESS ANY OF THE ALLEGATIONS IN THE ARTICLE, SUCH AS THE DEGREE TO WHICH RIGHT-WING TERRORISM IS FINANCED BY MIAMI EXILES?

A: THIS IS AN OLD ALLEGATION, WHICH WE'VE ADDRESSED OFTEN BEFORE. AGENCIES OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAVE BEEN INVESTIGATING THESE KINDS OF CHARGES FOR SOME MONTHS. WE WILL CONTINUE TO REPORT TO THEM ANY NEW INFORMATION RELATED TO THE CHARGES WHICH DEVELOP.

Q: WHAT ABOUT THE CHARGE THAT THEN DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL GUARD VIDES CASANOVA AND CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE DUARTE COVERED UP THE INVESTIGATION OF THE CHURCHWOMEN'S CASE?

A: WITHOUT GETTING INTO THE SUBSTANCE OF JUDGE TYLER'S REPORT ON THE CHURCHWOMEN'S CASE, WE WOULD SIMPLY NOTE THAT THE WEIGHT OF THE EVIDENCE CONTINUES TO SUPPORT A FINDING THAT THE CHURCHWOMEN WERE NOT MURDERED AS A RESULT OF ORDERS OR INSTRUCTIONS FROM SENIOR OFFICIALS, SUCH AS THE MILITARY HIGH COMMAND. BEYOND THAT, WE CANNOT AT THIS TIME DISCUSS ISSUES WHICH MIGHT PREJUDICE THE TRIAL.

THE ALLEGATION THAT JOSE NAPOLEON DUARTE WAS INVOLVED IN A COVER-UP IS NEW, AND WE'RE NOT PREPARED TO GET INTO SUBSTANCE AT THIS TIME WHICH MIGHT PREJUDICE THE CASE. BUT, BY ANY STANDARD, IT APPEARS INCONSISTENT WITH THE PUBLIC RECORD OF HIS CONDUCT RELATED TO THE CASE. ADDITIONALLY, THE DISLIKE OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY BY THE SOURCE IN THE ARTICLE WAS UNDISGUISED.

Q: WHAT ABOUT THE CHARGE THAT CURRENT DEFENSE MINISTER VIDES CASANOVA'S COUSIN, COL. OSCAR EDGARDO CASANOVA, ORDERED THE CHURCHWOMEN MURDERS?

A: THIS IS ALSO A NEW ALLEGATION, AND, UNDER THE SAME LIMITS OF NOT PREJUDICING THE CHURCHWOMEN'S CASE, THE ALLEGATION RAISES MORE QUESTIONS THAN IT ANSWERS SUCH AS:

THE FACT THAT HIS NAME WAS NOT PREVIOUSLY RAISED IN THE COURSE OF INVESTIGATIONS OVER THREE YEARS, THAT FBI POLYGRAPH EXAMS AND THE WEIGHT OF OTHER EVIDENCE HAVE SUPPORTED A FINDING THAT THERE WERE NO INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE HIGH COMMAND.

Q: WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER CHARGES MADE IN THE ARTICLE?

A: WE'RE IN NO POSITION TO GO DOWN THE CHARGES ONE BY ONE, AND ARE MAKING AN EFFORT TO DETERMINE THE SUBSTANCE BEHIND THEM.

-- EL SALVADOR: ATTACK ON PDC HEADQUARTERS --

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT ON THE ATTACK ON THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PDC) HEADQUARTERS IN SAN SALVADOR?

A: WE STRONGLY DEPLORE SUCH ACTS OF VIOLENCE. OUR

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EMBASSY CONFIRMS THAT THIS ATTACK OCCURRED AND THAT THERE WERE NO INJURIES. AS REPORTED IN THE PRESS, THE SECRET ANTI-COMMUNIST COMMAND CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS ATTACK. ALSO ON MARCH 6 THE GUERRILLAS IN SAN VICENTE DEPARTMENT MACHINE-GUNNED AN AMBULANCE KILLING TWO RED CROSS WORKERS WHO WERE ATTEMPTING TO COME TO THE AID OF BATTLE CASUALTIES.

VIOLENCE FROM BOTH THE LEFT AND THE RIGHT IS CLEARLY AIMED AT THE ELECTORAL PROCESS IN EL SALVADOR, AND WE CONDEMN BOTH. WE ARE CONVINCED THAT THE COURAGE AND THE DETERMINATION OF THE SALVADORAN PEOPLE WILL PREVAIL DESPITE THESE ATTEMPTS BY ARMED EXTREMISTS OF BOTH SIDES TO UNDERMINE THE ELECTIONS.

-- COLOMBIA: U.S. CUSTOMS CRACKDOWN --

Q: HAS THERE BEEN A CRACKDOWN ON PASSENGERS AND CARGO COMING FROM COLOMBIA?

A: THE U.S. CUSTOMS SERVICE, IN AN EFFORT TO FURTHER STEM THE FLOW OF NARCOTICS INTO THE UNITED STATES, SIGNIFICANTLY INTENSIFIED ITS SEARCHES ON MARCH 1. CARGO SHIPMENTS AND PASSENGERS COMING FROM COLOMBIA HAVE BEEN AFFECTED. IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT ALL TRAVELERS COMING FROM COLOMBIA, REGARDLESS OF NATIONALITY, ARE SUBJECT TO CLOSER SCRUTINY. WE FURTHER UNDERSTAND THAT EVERY EFFORT IS BEING MADE TO MINIMIZE THE DISRUPTION OF LEGITIMATE TRADE.

FURTHER QUESTIONS SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO THE U.S. CUSTOMS SERVICE.

-- ARGENTINA: FINANCIAL SITUATION --

Q: ANY COMMENT ON THE WP STORY TODAY THAT ARGENTINA IS SO FAR BEHIND IN ITS LOAN PAYMENTS THAT THE BANKS ARE CLASSIFYING THE DEBTS AS PROBLEM LOANS?

A: IT IS WORTH REMEMBERING THAT WHEN THE ALFONSIN ADMINISTRATION TOOK OFFICE IN DECEMBER IT INHERITED RECORD LEVELS OF INFLATION AND EXTERNAL DEBT. THE DEBT QUESTION IS A COMPLICATED ONE AND IS NOT AMENABLE TO A QUICK OR EASY SOLUTION. THE GOVERNMENT OF ARGENTINA HAS BEEN WORKING WITH THE IMF AND THE COMMERCIAL BANKS TO DEVELOP A PROGRAM TO STABILIZE THE ARGENTINE ECONOMY AND SERVICE ARGENTINA'S DEBT. THESE DISCUSSIONS CONTINUE, AND IT IS IN NO ONE'S INTEREST TO SEE THEM FAIL.

FYI TO SPOKESMAN: IF PRESSED FOR SPECIFICS, REFER TO TREASURY.

-- FALKLANDS WAR: U.S. AID TO THE UK --

Q: CAN YOU CONFIRM THE ECONOMIST AND WP STORIES ABOUT THE LOGISTICAL AND INTELLIGENCE ASSISTANCE GIVEN TO BRITAIN DURING THE FALKLANDS/MALVINAS WAR?

A: WE HAVE NOTHING TO ADD TO THE STATEMENTS AND INFORMATION PREVIOUSLY PROVIDED ON THIS SUBJECT.

2. SUMMARY OF NOON PRESS BRIEFING, MARCH 7, 1984 (HUGHES)

BRIEFING BEGAN WITH CENTRAL AMERICA AND EL SALVADOR, AND EXCEPT FOR BRIEF FORAY INTO MIDDLE EAST, STAYED THERE.

THE SECRETARY SEEMED A LITTLE TESTY YESTERDAY -- WOULD YOU SAY THAT'S AN ACCURATE DESCRIPTION? SPOKESMAN SAID THE

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SECRETARY WAS "VIGOROUS IN ARTICULATING HIS POSITION." DOES HE THINK THE ADMINISTRATION WILL GET WHAT IT WANTS IN TERMS OF EL SALVADOR AID? SPOKESMAN SAID THE SECRETARY DOES HOPE THE ADMINISTRATION WILL GET WHAT IT HAS ASKED FOR. THE SECRETARY FEELS THE COMMISSION ON CENTRAL AMERICA WAS BIPARTISAN, WITH PEOPLE FROM ALL PARTS OF THE SPECTRUM. THE MEMBERS WORKED HARD -- THIS WAS NOT A MANUFACTURED REPORT, BUT REPRESENTS DEDICATED WORK BY THE COMMISSION, WHO CAME TO CERTAIN CONCLUSIONS. THE SECRETARY HOPES THAT MEMBERS OF CONGRESS WILL COME TO SEE THE WISDOM OF THOSE CONCLUSIONS.

BUT LANE KIRKLAND, A MEMBER OF THE COMMISSION, OPPOSES MILITARY AID BECAUSE HE BELIEVES THE GOVERNMENT OF EL-SALVADOR DOESN'T FULFILL THE CONDITIONS SET OUT IN THE REPORT ITSELF -- CAN YOU EXPLAIN THAT? SPOKESMAN SAID HE COULD NOT SPEAK FOR MR. KIRKLAND. THERE SEEMS TO BE SOME DISAGREEMENT ON THE ISSUE OF CONDITIONALITY AMONG THE MEMBERS THEMSELVES -- I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY THE STATE DEPT. IS NOW SAYING THAT THE COMMISSION AGREED THAT MILITARY AID SHOULD CONTINUE UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES? SPOKESMAN REFERRED THE REPORTER TO THE COMMISSION REPORT ITSELF. THE SECRETARY AND THE PRESIDENT HAVE BOTH ARTICULATED THE ADMINISTRATION'S VIEW ON CONDITIONALITY, AND WE HOPE THIS CAN BE WORKED OUT WITH THE CONGRESS. IS THE SECRETARY REALLY SAYING THE SITUATION IS SO SERIOUS THAT UNLESS MILITARY AID IS PROVIDED VERY QUICKLY, SALVADORAN GOVERNMENT FORCES WILL NOT HAVE THE MEANS TO REPEL GUERRILLA ATTACKS? SPOKESMAN SAID HE DID NOT LIKE TO TRY TO REINTERPRET THE SECRETARY'S WORDS, BUT THE UNDERLYING THEME IS THAT THERE WILL BE AN ELECTION THE END OF MARCH, WHICH MAY NOT BE CONCLUSIVE MAKING A SECOND ROUND OF ELECTIONS PERHAPS NECESSARY. SO YOU HAVE AN ELECTION CAMPAIGN EXTENDING OVER TWO OR THREE MONTHS. IT IS A FAIR SURMISE, AND THERE IS ALREADY EVIDENCE TO THAT EFFECT, THAT THE LEFT WOULD LIKE TO INTERRUPT THE ELECTORAL PROCESS. THIS PUTS AN ADDED STRAIN ON THE MILITARY, WHICH MUST DEPLOY DIFFERENTLY AND DRAW UPON ITS RESOURCES. AS LONG AS THERE IS A QUESTION ABOUT THOSE RESOURCES, IT IS DIFFICULT TO PROVIDE A SECURITY SHIELD.

ARE YOU SAYING THE SALVADORAN MILITARY DOESN'T HAVE THE MEANS AT ITS DISPOSAL FOR THE NEXT TWO OR THREE MONTHS? SPOKESMAN SAID HE COULD NOT GIVE A PRECISE TIME WHEN THE SALVADORAN MILITARY MIGHT RUN OUT OF AMMUNITION, OR WHAT THEY MIGHT BE CALLED UPON TO DO. BUT WHEN THEY MUST BOB AROUND, AND DON'T KNOW FROM MONTH TO MONTH WHAT THE SITUATION WITH THEIR RESOURCES WILL BE, IT TAKES THE HEART OUT OF THEIR WILL TO FIGHT.

REP. LONG SUGGESTED THAT ADDITIONAL AID TO EL SALVADOR SHOULD NOT BE GIVEN BEFORE THE ELECTION, SO THAT MEMBERS OF CONGRESS COULD SEE IF ROBERTO D'AUBUISSON IS GOING TO WIN -- WHAT WOULD BE THE ADMINISTRATION'S REACTION TO POSTPONING THE QUESTION OF SUPPLEMENTAL AID UNTIL AFTER THE ELECTION SO CONGRESS CAN SEE WHO WINS? SPOKESMAN SAID THERE WOULD BE MANY WHO BELIEVED THAT WOULD HAVE A CRITICAL EFFECT ON THE CONDUCT OF THE ARMY, BUT PROMISED TO LOOK INTO THE DEPARTMENT'S POSITION.

THE SECRETARY SAID BEFORE THE SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE THAT SINCE WE ARE CALLING ON THE SALVADORANS TO CONDUCT FREE AND HONEST ELECTIONS, WE MUST ACCEPT THE RESULTS -- DOES THAT STILL HOLD. SPOKESMAN SAID THE SECRETARY'S WORDS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES. IF WE BELIEVE IN THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS, WE MUST FOLLOW IT TO THE END -- WE CAN'T PICK AND CHOOSE CANDIDATES. DOES THE DEPARTMENT HAVE A CONTINGENCY POSITION OF ROBERTO D'AUBUISSON WINS? SPOKESMAN SAID WE ARE ENTHUSIASTICALLY IN FAVOR OF THE

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ELECTORAL PROCESS; THERE ARE SIX CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENT. THAT PROCESS ALSO APPARENTLY INCLUDES THE SHOOTING UP OF A DUARTE CAMPAIGN OFFICE--ANY COMMENT? SPOKESMAN READ THE PREPARED GUIDANCE. ALSO, ABOUT TEN DAYS AGO, THE LARGEST LABOR UNION THERE GAVE A PRESS CONFERENCE IN WHICH IT CHARGED THAT MANY OF ITS MEMBERS HAD BEEN APPROACHED BY ARMY OFFICERS AND TOLD TO VOTE FOR THE PCN OR ARENA PARTIES, BUT NOT THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS -- ANY COMMENT? SPOKESMAN SAID HE HAD NOTHING ON THAT.

IS IT CORRECT TO ASSUME THAT THE ADMINISTRATION IS STRENGTHENING ITS POSITION ON EL SALVADOR BECAUSE OF LEBANON, SINCE THEY ARE TAKING PARALLEL LINES? SPOKESMAN SAID THE TWO CASES ARE NOT PARALLEL. THE ADMINISTRATION IS TAKING ITS CENTRAL AMERICA POSITION BECAUSE IT BELIEVES IT IS RIGHT. WE BELIEVE THIS IS AN IMPORTANT AREA, WITH IMPORTANT ISSUES AT STAKE FOR US AND THE PEOPLE OF CENTRAL AMERICA. THOSE SOUND LIKE THE SAME TERMS MENTIONED WHEN WE GOT INVOLVED IN LEBANON? SPOKESMAN SAID THOSE PRINCIPLES UNDERLIE U.S. FOREIGN POLICY AROUND THE WORLD. WE OPERATE IN MANY AREAS WHERE THE OUTCOME IS IN OUR NATIONAL INTEREST. AT THE SAME TIME, WE HAVE A COMPASSIONATE INTEREST IN PROMOTING PEACE AND IN ENCOURAGING THE ABILITY OF FREE MEN TO LIVE IN A SOCIETY OF THEIR OWN CHOOSING.

IS THE ADMINISTRATION'S CONCERN ABOUT EL SALVADOR SO DEEP BECAUSE IT COMES SO SOON AFTER THE SETBACK IN LEBANON -- DOES IT FEAR THAT IF THE GOES DOES NOT GET SUFFICIENT ARMS THAT IT MIGHT SUFFER MAJOR SETBACKS? SPOKESMAN SAID PEOPLE COULD MAKE THAT SURMISE, BUT IT IS NOT ACCURATE THAT WE HAVE ONLY LATELY COME TO OUR COMMITMENT IN EL SALVADOR. WE HAVE HAD SUCH A COMMITMENT FOR SOME TIME, AND THE REASONS ARE OBVIOUS. WHAT ABOUT THE CONCERN -- IS THAT NEW? SPOKESMAN SAID NO, THAT THE KISSINGER COMMISSION WAS AT WORK FOR MANY MONTHS. ITS ANALYSIS AND OUR CONCERN ABOUT THAT AREA AND OUR UNENTHUSIASTIC ATTITUDE TOWARD THE FLOW OF OUTSIDE ARMS INTO THE AREA HAS NOT SURFACED BECAUSE OF EVENTS IN LEBANON. WOULD YOU SAY THEN THAT THE CONGRESS IS TAKING OUT ITS IRE ON THE LEBANON ISSUE BY ITS ACTIONS ON CENTRAL AMERICA? SPOKESMAN SAID HE WOULDN'T DREAM OF TRYING TO INTERPRET CONGRESSIONAL MOTIVATIONS.

IS THE DECISION ON WHETHER TO GO AROUND CONGRESS AND USE EMERGENCY FUNDS TO PROVIDE AID TO EL SALVADOR NOW BEFORE THE PRESIDENT? SPOKESMAN SAID NO DECISION HAS BEEN MADE. THE SECRETARY SAID YESTERDAY THAT NO DECISION HAS BEEN MADE AND ALSO THAT THE QUESTION WAS NOT BEFORE THE PRESIDENT. DOES THAT STILL HOLD? SPOKESMAN SAID THAT WAS STILL TRUE.

DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT ON YESTERDAY'S CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR STORY ON MISMANAGEMENT OF AID FUNDS IN EL SALVADOR? SPOKESMAN REFERRED THE QUESTIONER TO TUESDAY'S GUIDANCE ON THAT SUBJECT.

THERE ARE REPORTS THAT THERE ARE DISCUSSIONS GOING ON WITH THE SOVIET UNION ON A COMPROMISE THAT WOULD BRING THEM INTO THE PICTURE IN THE MIDDLE EAST IN EXCHANGE FOR GIVING THE U.S. A FREE HAND IN CENTRAL AMERICA -- ANY CONFIRMATION OF THAT? SPOKESMAN SAID THERE ARE ALWAYS PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS GOING ON BETWEEN THE U.S. AND THE SOVIET UNION, THROUGH THEIR AMBASSADOR HERE AND OUR AMBASSADOR THERE. WHILE OUR POSITION MUST BE THAT WE DON'T TALK ABOUT PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS, YOU WOULD BE ON SHAKY GROUND TO SUGGEST WE WOULD IN ANY WAY BRING THE SOVIETS INTO THE MIDDLE EAST. IF YOU SAY THAT THE GUERRILLAS IN EL SALVADOR DON'T HAVE

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POPULAR SUPPORT, WHY THEN HAVE YOUR ESTIMATES OF GUERRILLA FORCES DOUBLED? SPOKESMAN SAID HE THOUGHT THERE WAS GUIDANCE ON THAT SUBJECT FROM SOME WEEKS AGO, AND THE REPORTER SHOULD CHECK IN THE PRESS OFFICE.

ANYTHING ON NICARAGUAN CHARGES THAT MINES ARE BEING SUPPLIED TO THE INSURGENTS? SPOKESMAN SAID HE HAD NOTHING. HAS THE U.S. RECEIVED A PROTEST NOTE ABOUT THAT? SPOKESMAN SAID HE WOULD LOOK INTO THE QUESTION.

SHULTZ
END OF MESSAGE

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